

Advaita, the Spiritual Society

About the Society:

Advaita-the Spiritual Society of Hansraj College, is an endeavour to help students transcend the difficulties and uncertainties that are almost inseparable from today's life. Main aim of the society is to disseminate spiritual wisdom, spanning diverse streams, in an apprehensible and pragmatic way to the youth.

Advaita society is dedicated to raising human consciousness, promoting *niswarth sewa*, and facilitating a suitable ambience to the seekers in the quest for truth. We strive to foster harmony and communion among youths through individual transformation and stimulating discussions on issues concerning our lives.

Guided by eminent speakers, Advaita is an essential resource for exploring the Bharatiya spiritual wisdom and ancient science of *dhyana-yoga* in all its depth and dimensions. From powerful meditation workshops for inner transformation to social welfare projects, discourses and musical events, our activities try to create an inclusive culture that is the basis for individual well-being and global harmony.

Our motto is 'tat tvam asi' (तत्त्वम्असि), a central tenet of the Upanishads which means there is only one universal self, and we are all one with it.

Convener name:

Dr. Parul Pant

Student members (with positions held):

President- Yuvraj Singh

Vice-president- Gaurav Singh Thakur

Treasurer- Puneet Jain

Spokesperson- Abhishek Singh

Wing heads:

Aditi Arya

Anirudh Naveen

Manik Pandey

Rajat Pratap Singh

Tarun Chandak

Mandal heads:

Rishabh Kunal

Prerana Singh

Naman Kumar Bahari

Jiya Navashree

Sandhya Chauhan

Pragati Prerana

Report of EVERY EVENT/workshop/seminar organized/participated in the Academic Year 20-21 (Chronology: latest to oldest) in the following lay out:

Event 1. Nanak Sewa Mandal, the Social Service forum This community works to uphold the virtue of *niswarth sewa* and is solely devoted to service and *shram daan*, which is the epitome of spiritual pursuit. The volunteers organized helpdesks for students and various other social issues. Advaita, in collaboration with Ramakrishna Mission, organized a four-session series titled 'From Self to Service' spanning from 17th November to 8th of December. All four speakers, i.e., Swami Narasimhananda Ji (17th Nov) - Secretary of Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kozhikode, Swami

Tattwamayananda Ji (24th Nov) - Minister of Vedanta Society of Northern California, Swami Atmashraddhananda Ji (1st Dec) - Secretary of Ramkrishna Mission Ashrama, Kanpur and Swami Shantatmananda Ji (8th Dec) - head of Delhi Centre of RKM, gave profound insights into the nature of self and how, a realized self inclines naturally towards service. Their message was filled with wisdom that can be gained only through experience and was whole-heartedly received by the audience.

All four sessions were marked by the presence of young spiritual seekers blooming with enthusiasm whose queries were answered in questionnaires . Overall, the series proved to be a resounding success as it provided a much-needed exposition of two crucial elements of spiritual life and the knots which tie them together.

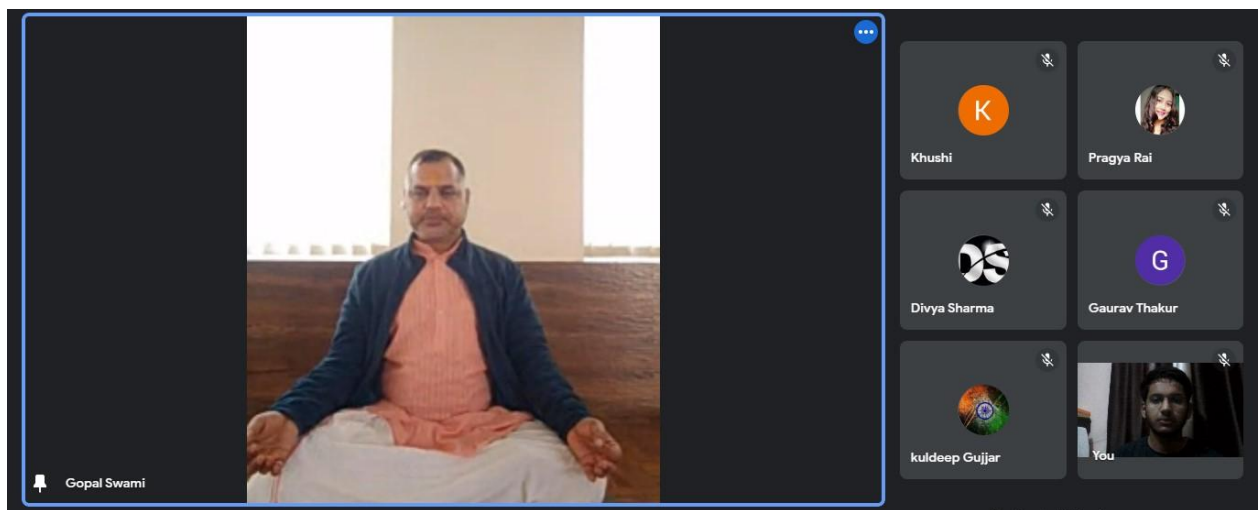
Helpdesks were inaugurated for Humanities, Science, and Commerce on 10th October to help the aspirants who faced queries regarding their admission to the University We tried our best to solve all their doubts regarding colleges, courses, cut-offs, syllabi, and other issues.

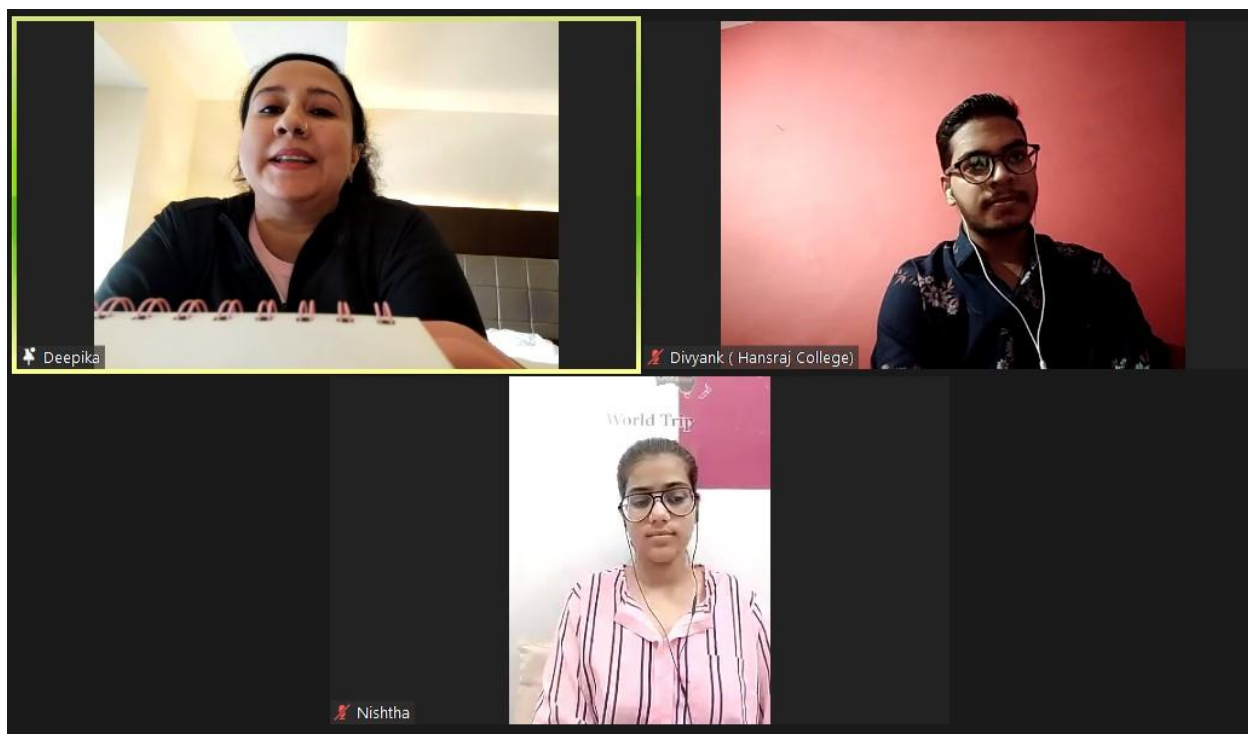
Event 2. Maharshi Patanjali Mandal, the Meditation Forum

This community is sincerely dedicated to the promotion of Yoga (Ashtang Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Aasans, Mudras, and Kriyas) and various meditation practices, for the physical and mental wellbeing of the members. Various workshops are held to introduce the audience to various kinds of practices for internal cleansing, deepening the focus, detoxification, and better psychological health. Advaita organised an enriching session with a professional Practitioner of Reiki, Smt. Deepika Chauhan on 10 September 2021. The speaker elucidated on the science of inner healing, energies, and the chakras, sharing her personal experience of practicing the technique over years.

A 'Meditation Made Easy' workshop was organised, in collaboration with EthicCraft Club from 4th October to 6th October 2021. The instructors were Aravindaksha Madhava Prabhu Ji (He is deputy director of ISKCON Youth

Forum and co-president EthicCraft Club. He has been a Vaishnava Monk for 10 years and a B.Tech. in Aeronautical Engineering) and Shuklamber Prabhu Ji (Psychology First Aid from John Hopkins University and a lawyer at Delhi High Court). Effective mantra chanting methods were taught to the students for inner peace and tranquillity of the mind. In collaboration with the YogaVedant trust, Advaita Society presented another meditation workshop for all those seekers who were naive to the practice. The workshops were conducted on week day's morning, beginning from 8 November 2021 by Yogi Gopal Ji, a trainer from the trust.





Event 3. Gandharva Mandal, the Arts Forum

This community is for all those enthusiasts of music, dance, poetry, and fine arts to come together to manifest the divine arts. People showcase and nourish their artistic talents and mutually grow. Cultural programmes helmed by this wing add an aesthetic flavour to the society's endeavours. The artists are given a chance to perform at various events of the society and for occasional social media posts.

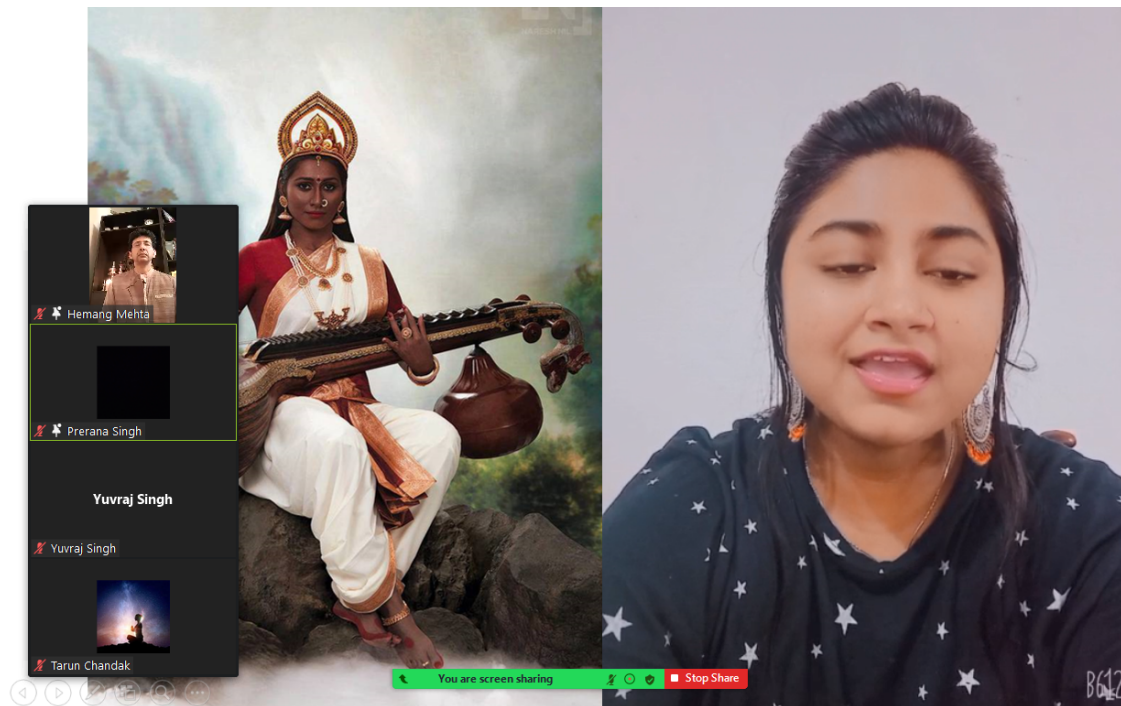
Under the aegis of this Mandal, Advaita successfully organized an event with the renowned classical vocalist from the Mewati Gharana, Shri Hemang Mehta Ji on 3rd December 2021. The theme for the discourse was 'Music and Spirituality: an immortal association'.

Shri Hemang Mehta, who is a disciple of the revered Late Shri Pandit Jasraj Ji, got the session off to a rollicking start by rendering one of the most timeless compositions of Shri Adi Shankaracharya- the Nirvana Shatakam.

सि दानन्दरूपः सि वोऽहम्सि वोऽहम्॥

The rendition left the audience dazzled, as the vocalist extracted the essence of the composition with sublime variations, offering a glimpse into his mastery of the art. The musical piece was followed by a brief yet profoundly enlightening address, wherein Shri Hemang Ji spoke about his association with classical music and its spiritual value in his life.

He emphasized certain life skills that must be incorporated- regardless of one's dreams or aspirations- to ensure a holistic life, including discipline, vegetarianism, and respect for parents and teachers.





Event 4. Kasturi-the Deepotsava Celebration

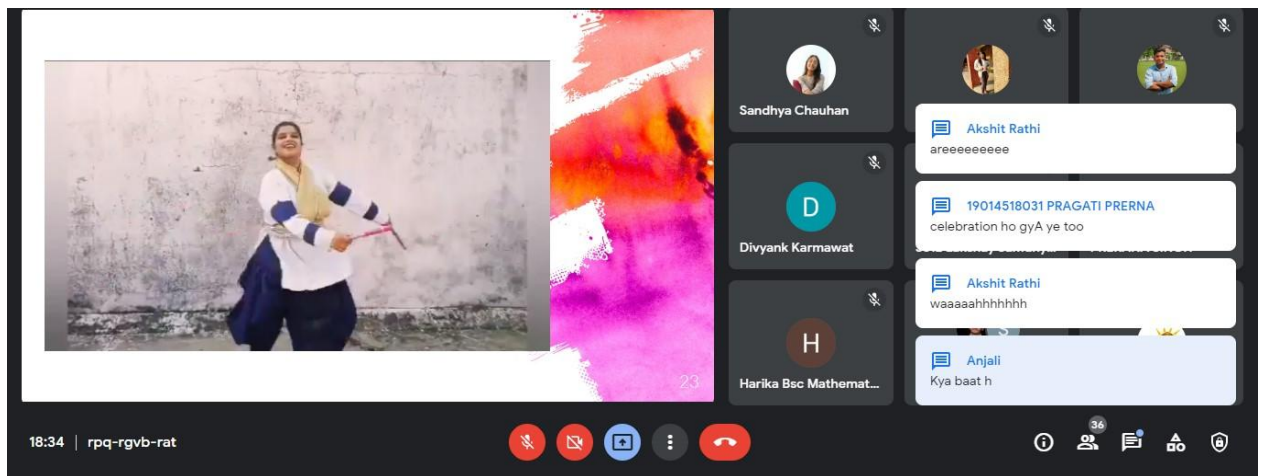
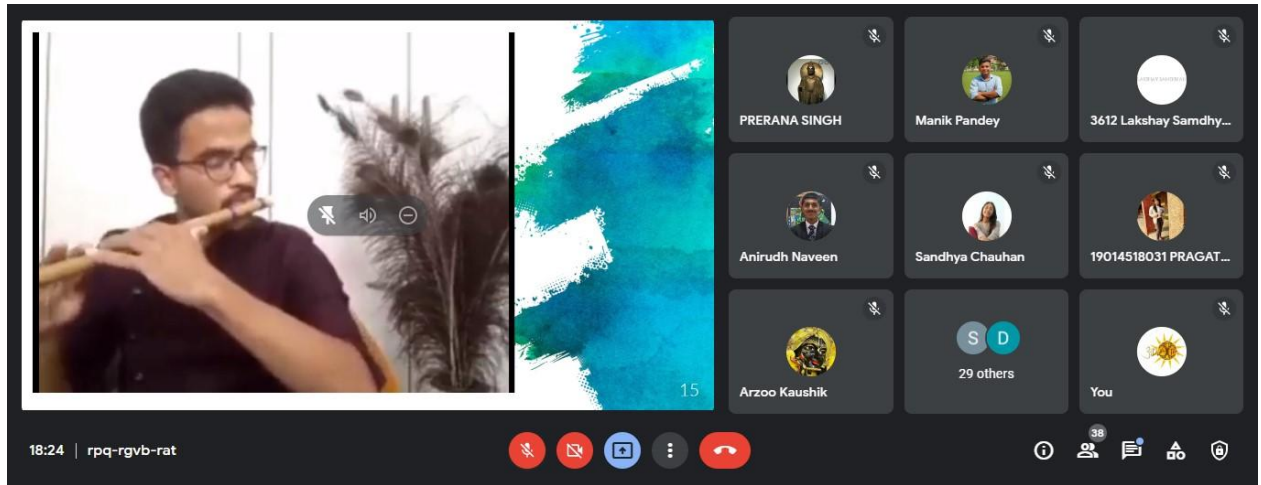
"A spark made in the hope of finding the truth will always light up the cave of darkness and fill the void in our hearts with knowledge and gratitude"

Advaita's Deepavali carnival, named Kasturi, was organised on 2nd November which aimed at creating impeccable memories on the occasion of the festivity.

The theme of the event was "From darkness to light", heralding the society's vision for a reformed and progressive culture, shedding the clutches of orthodoxy and insularity. The melodious instrumental compositions, aesthetic poems, and soothing voices of the members drew the strings of the audiences' heart and the graceful dance performances left the audience mesmerized.

Advaita also shared the beautiful memories of the "Deepotsava" as

celebrated by our members from different parts of our country encapsulated in a video form by Shri Akshit. It was an attempt to make a vibrant melange of diverse cultures and rituals associated with different parts of Bharat.





Event 5. Gitamritam Bhagavad Gita Course

Launched in collaboration with the EthicCraft club, this 18 session lifestyle management course on Bhagavad Gita began on 11 September. 2200+ students and professionals registered to partake in this blissful experience of re-living 18 chapters of Gita. The course was inaugurated by Dr. Rama, Principal of Hansraj College.

The 18 chapter treatise was enlivened and immortalized by discourses from several esteemed lecturers and learned monks from the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

The Bhagavad Gita is a millennia-old treatise that contains timeless ideas to facilitate this process of healing. Reading and comprehending the Gita has transformed the lives of millions of people over the centuries.

Equally treasured as a guide to action, a devotional scripture, a philosophical text, and inspirational reading, it remains one of the world's most influential, widely read spiritual books.

We had 18 sessions in total, all devoted to the explanation of the 18 chapters of the Bhagavad Gita. As our speakers, we had, H.G. Aravindaksha Madhav Das, B.A. Swami Janardhana Maharaj, H.G. Sundar

Gopal Das, H.G. Amogh Lila Das, H.G. Chakravarti Das, H.G. Mohunrupa Das, H.G. Das Raghunath Prabhuji, H.G. Rambhadra Das, and Shri Shubh Vilas Ji, who gave lectures on various chapters of Bhagavad Gita. 40 days meditation challenge for the students of this course that saw active participation from people all over the University of Delhi.

Overview

Chapter 10

01. Source of Everything (10.1-10.7)

- To Know Krishna
- Source of all
- Known yet unknown

02. Essence of Bhagavad Gita (10.8-10.11)

- Sambandha (Awareness)
 - One's relationship with Krishna
- Prayojana (Goal)
 - Abhideya (process)
 - How to achieve Krishna
 - Love of Krishna

03. Tell me more (10.12-10.19)

- Arjuna's acceptance
- Arjuna's references
- Arjuna's eagerness

04. See Krishna everywhere (10.20-10.42)

- Krishna's aishwarya
- Krishna is the essence

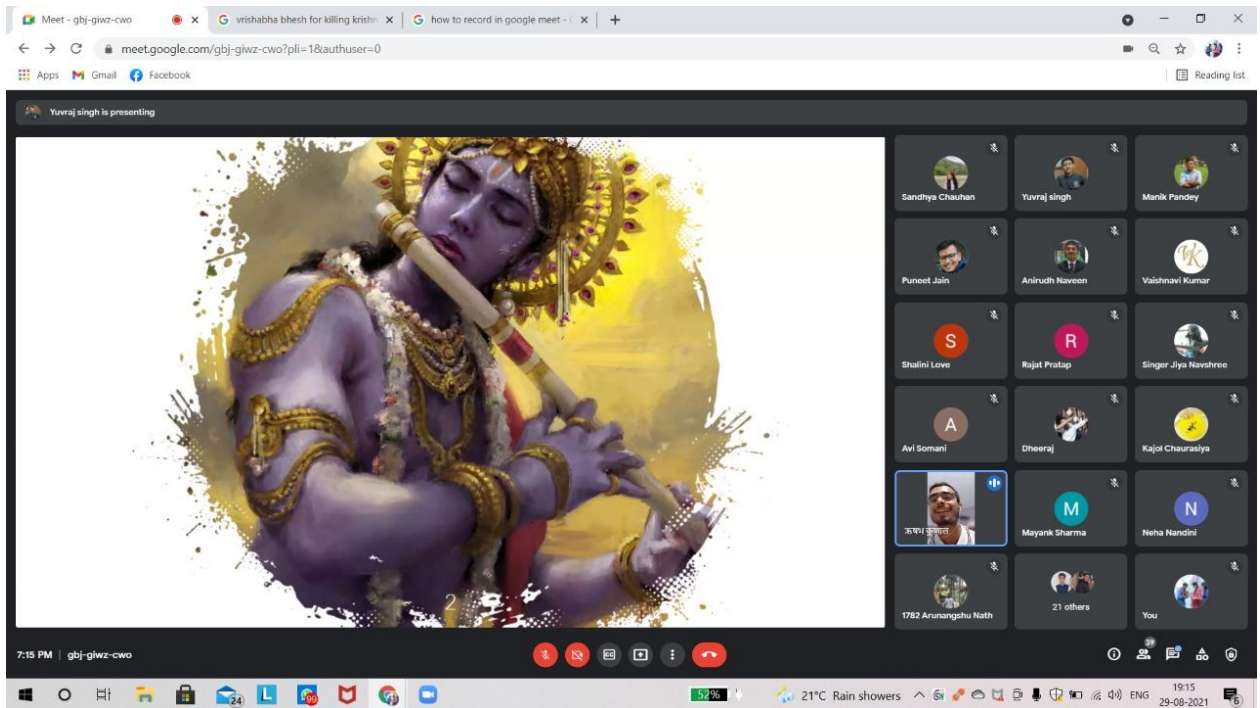
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Unmute Start Video Participants 157 Chat 10 Share Screen Record Reactions Apps Leave

Event 6. Janamashtmi Celebration

An in-house session was held with Swami Vedatitananda Ji on “Shri Krishna- In the Light of Advaita Vedanta” on 26 August.

On various occasions, we organize events on Bhajans, Sufi ghazals, Shabads, etc to create a vibrant and festive eve where we all can cherish the musical aspect of spirituality. One such event was organised on eve of Krishna Janmashtmi on 29 August .



Event 7. Udghosh Session 3

The third session under the lecture series Udghosh was successfully held

on 3rd September 2021. Shri Amogh Lila Prabhu Ji, Vice President of Dwaraka ISKCON was the distinguished guest on this occasion. The event was concluded by our respected Principal Prof. Rama, who congratulated the Advaita society for a successful inaugural series.

Shri Amogh Lila Ji's presence made the evening a memorable one for the almost three hundred strong audiences. The theme for the session was 'Love: A divine Union', and Prabhu Ji gave an intriguing, hour-long exposition on the essence of divinity keeping the Bhagavad Gita as the fundamental treatise.

The four yogas- Bhakti yoga, Jnana yoga, Karma Yoga, and Ashtanga Yoga- and their intricate connection with divinity were explained using some immaculate illustrations. Most of all the ideas and examples brought a smile to the face of students earnestly seeking clarity on the complex terrain of love. Amogh Lila Ji's perspective was refreshing and comprehensive, giving a lot of food for thought to the youngsters who tuned in.

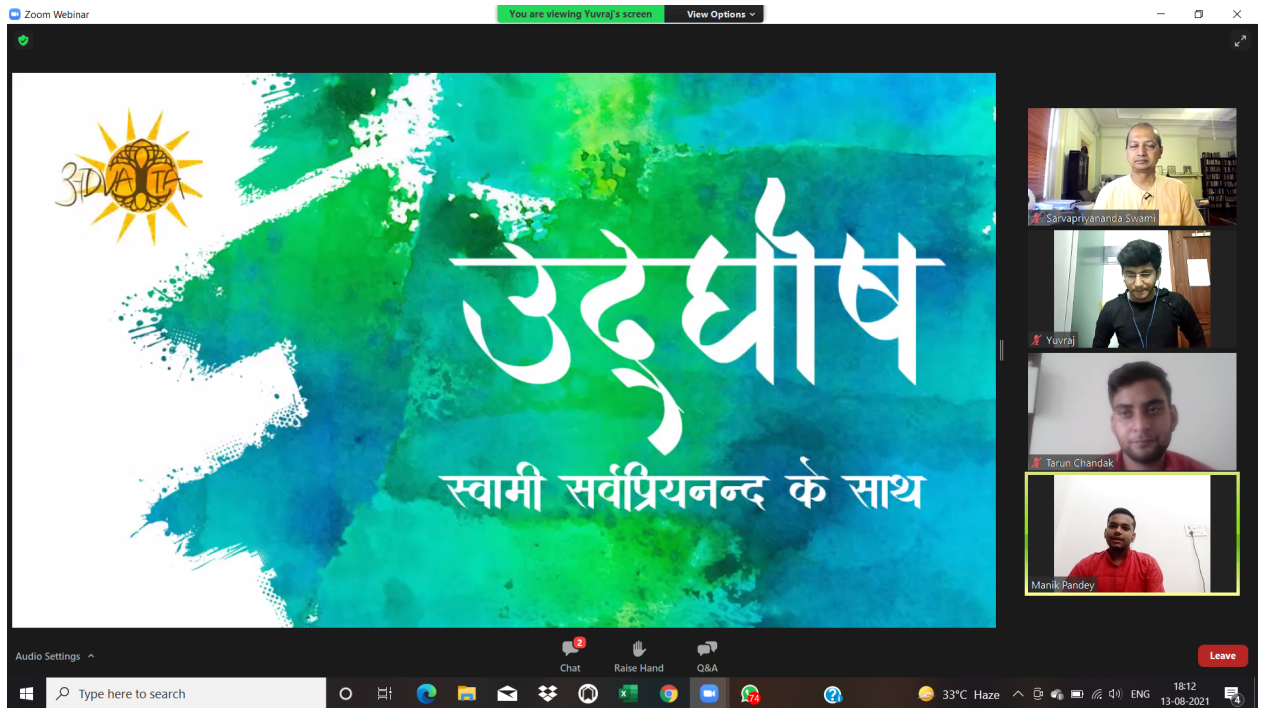
Event 8. Udghosh Session 2

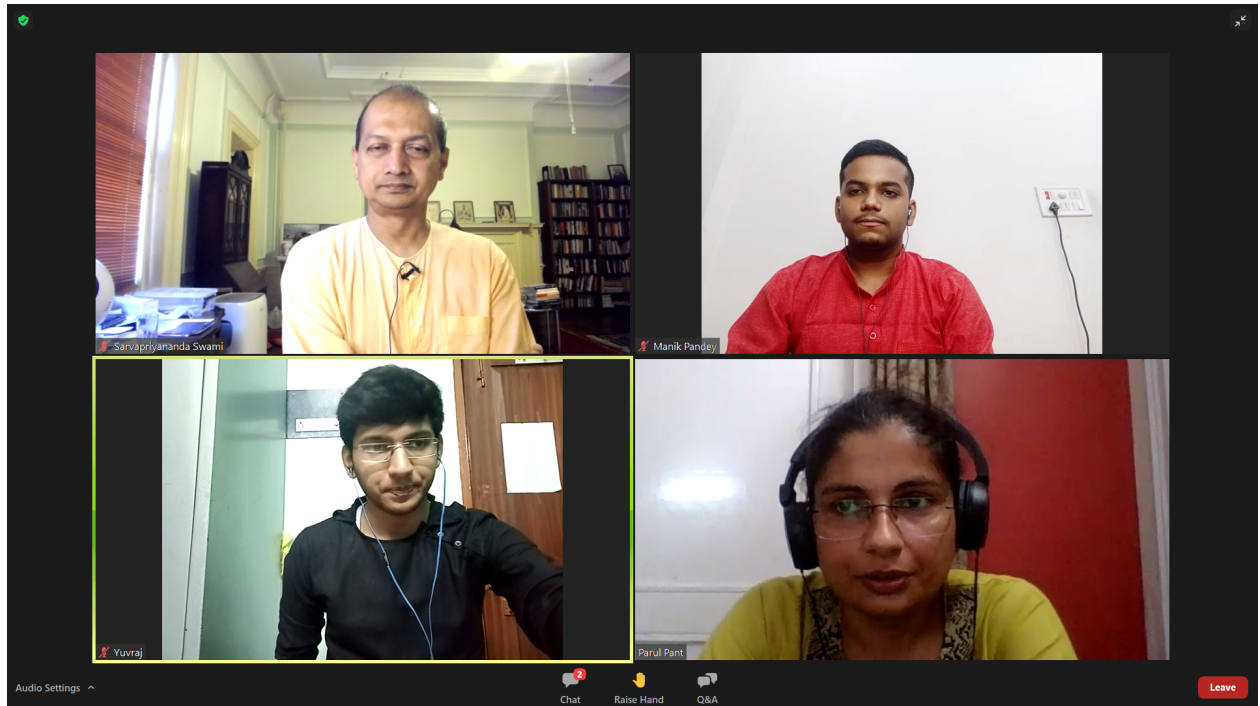
“When you begin seeing God in every dust particle of the world, that is Advaita.’

Advaita successfully organized its second event under the lecture series Udghosh on 13th August 2021. The society and the audience were privileged to have His Excellency Swami Sarvapriyananda Ji addressing the audience on this occasion. As the head of the Vedanta Society of New York, Swami Sarvapriyananda has been associated with the Ramakrishna Mission for nearly three decades, with a wealth of spiritual experience.

On the heels of the 75th Independence Day, students and teachers flocked into the webinar to listen to a spiritual titan express his views on ‘Advaita Vedanta and the views of Swami Vivekananda’. Needless to say, the event turned out to be a roaring success. By the end of the session, every

attendee was left mesmerized by Swamiji's erudition. Using simple yet powerful illustrations, Swamiji covered a vast spectrum of themes concerning Advaita Vedanta. He discussed the notion of universal consciousness, the basis of 'Aham Brahmasmi', the innate divinity present within each human being, the concept of 'manovritti', and the importance of having a spiritual goal in life. Swami Vivekananda's views on these issues were conveyed with profound simplicity, such that students could relate to the ideas easily. He particularly emphasized how ordinary individuals with a spiritual quest can practice the four yogas as expounded by Swami Vivekananda. This was followed by an even more enriching question-answer session, where Swamiji enthusiastically engaged with queries raised by students and teachers. Safe to say that the spiritual canvas of each attendee was embroidered by Swamiji's address, and everyone was left yearning for more.



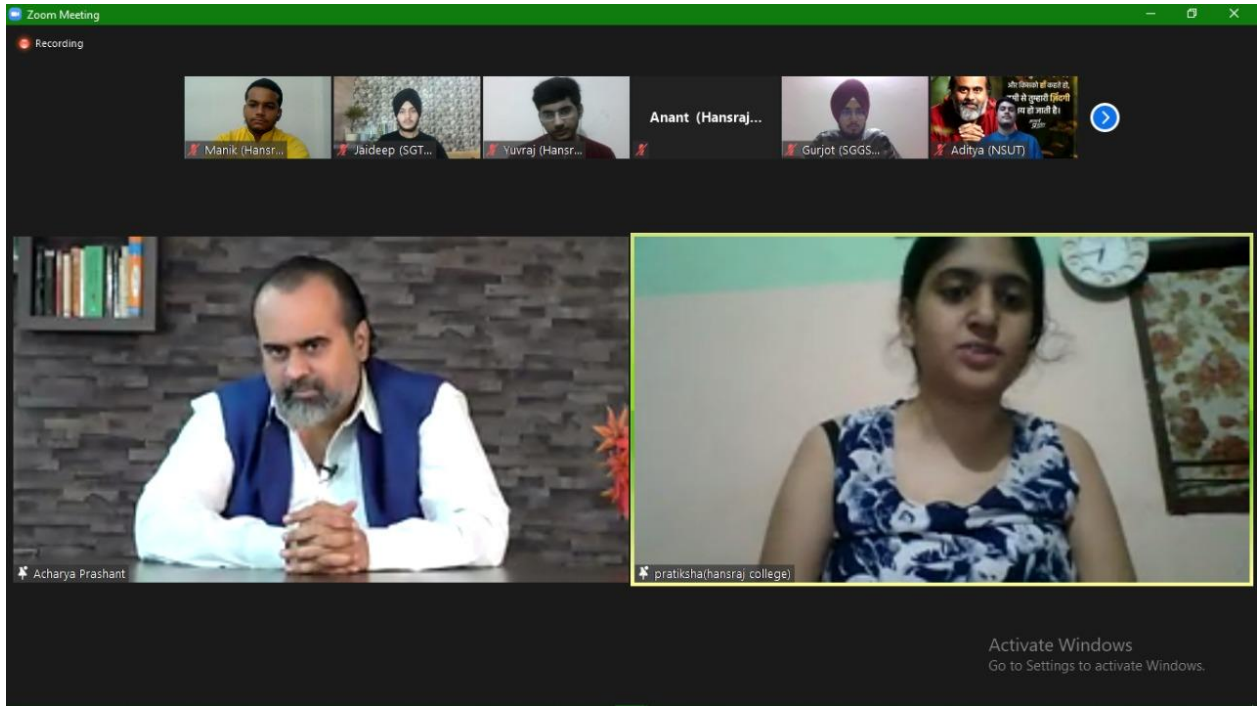


9. Udghosh Session 1

The first session of the series was organised on 28 July 2021, with Acharya Prashant, a renowned spiritual speaker, and Vedanta philosopher. An ex-Civil servant, he is also an alumnus of the prestigious IIT Delhi and IIM Ahmedabad. Students from different colleges and universities posed many questions on spirituality and its practical implications. Acharya Ji, answered them

with precision, giving innumerable illustrations to help students overcome their challenges with a calm head. The session lasted for 2.5 hours and each minute proved to be precious! It was attended by 250+ students and professors.

Photos:





10. Kabir Mandal, the discussion forum

Shastrarth is an integral ingredient of spirituality, and this is a platform for the same, where restless minds meet, discuss and resolve their stinging curiosities. Weekly sessions are held where attendees articulate their opinion on pivotal contemporary issues, read excerpts from philosophical literature or listen to discourses of popular philosophers and thinkers. Regular discussions are held on the WhatsApp groups on issues concerning mental and social wellbeing with every member given an opportunity to voice his/her opinions.

There has been a deliberate attempt to infuse, in every individual, a sense of inquisitiveness about human existence, nature of self, and various philosophies. We have constantly tried to conduct discussions in the most obliging way possible, with stress on the rational methodology of reasoning and logical approach of *tarka* and *pramana*.

Weekly *vimarsha* sessions are conducted in a vivid and structured manner

to reach certain common ground. Topics of the *vimarsha* session were-

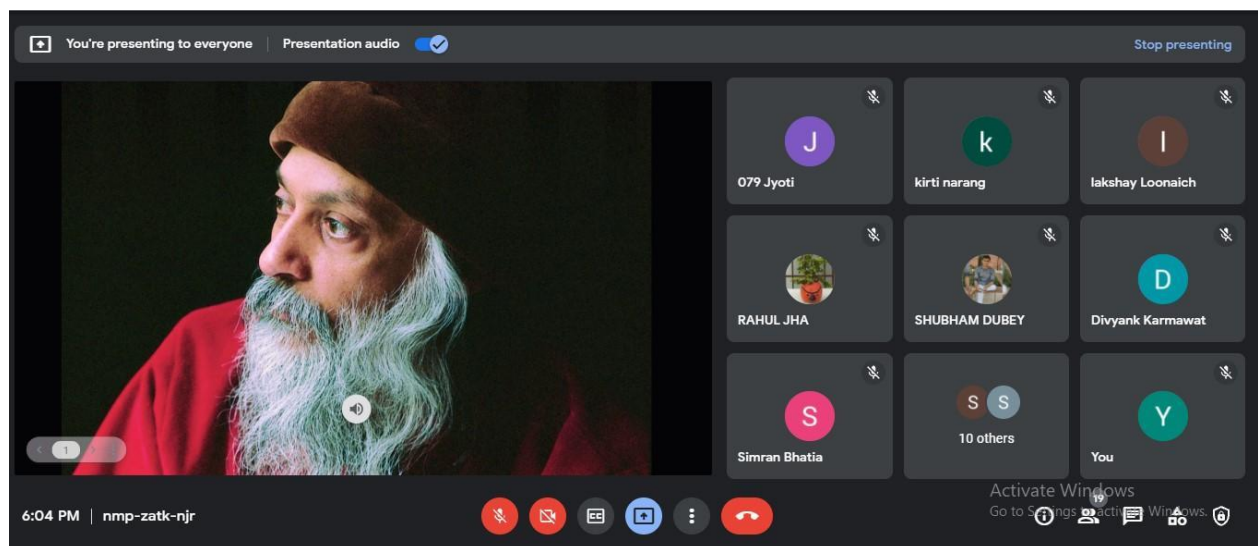
🎬 Meaning of Life from multiple prisms (5 December), mediated by Ku. Prerana. 🎬 Concept of Advaita from the eyes of Adishankara and contrasts of Dayananda's views (14 November), mediated by Shri Kshitij.

🎬 The difference between being a devotee and a lover (28 October), mediated by Shri Sajal. 🎬 Law of Attraction and getting rid of bad habits (20 October), a discourse by Osho Rajneesh.

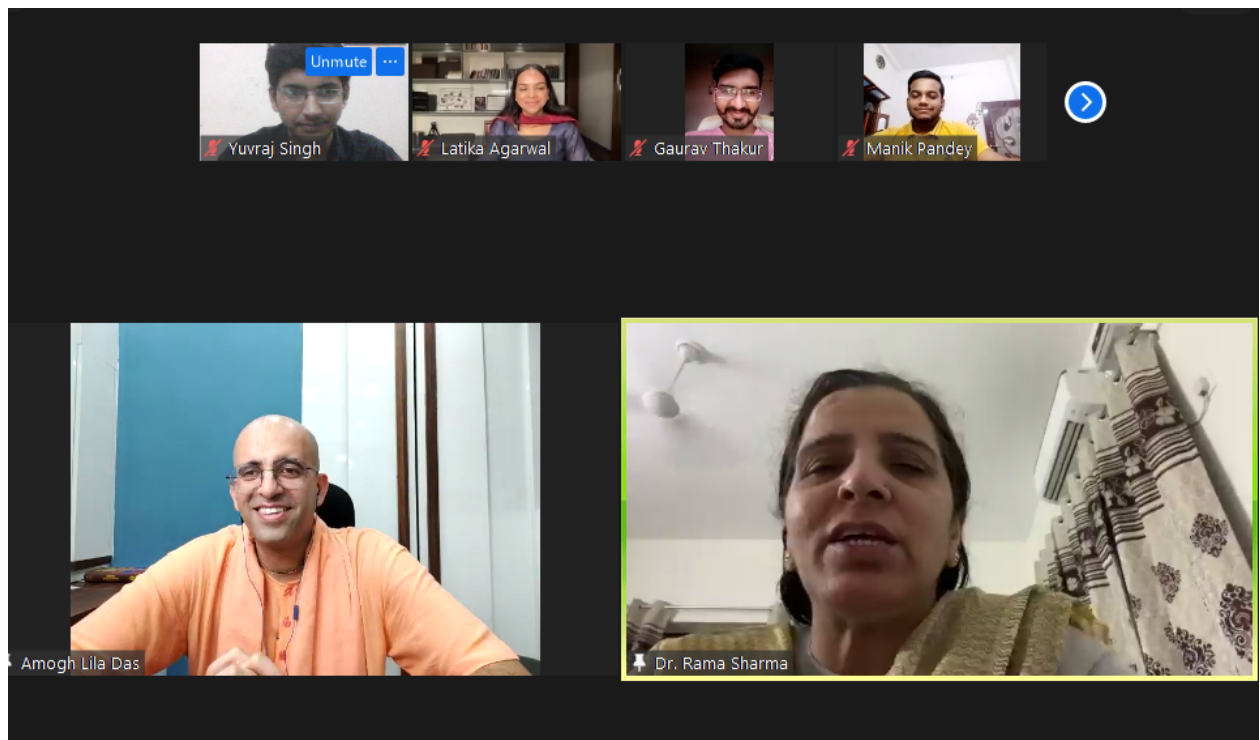
🎬 No one can be an atheist (8 October), mediated by Shri Rishabh.

🎬 Who am I? What is the self? (8 September), mediated by Shri Sagar.

🎬 Is war justified? (24 August), mediated by Ku. Jyoti and Shri Aditya Abhishek. 🎬 Spirituality and mental well-being (2 August), mediated by Shri Yuvraj.



Photographs





LOGO OF THE SOCIETY

